



**United States Department of Justice  
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## **News Release**

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### **White Bear Lake man pleads guilty to growing more than 100 marijuana plants**

A 27-year-old White Bear Lake man pleaded guilty this week to one count of growing more than 100 marijuana plants in his home.

Soua Vang entered his plea April 1 in St. Paul before United States District Court Judge Donovan Frank. He was charged March 6 with one count of manufacture of marijuana. According to his plea agreement, Vang also agreed that he manufactured approximately 900 viable marijuana plants.

According to a Drug Enforcement Administration affidavit, a White Bear Lake volunteer firefighter notified law enforcement on Jan. 26, 2008, regarding a home located on Michael Avenue, in White Bear Lake. The firefighter responded to a complaint of a citizen who believed the home might be on fire because the house's exterior had large amounts of condensation and there was a lack of snow on the roof. The firefighter concluded that the exterior of the home was hot to the touch, but observed no smoke or fire.

Vang was observed driving past the home and was later stopped by police. Officers told Vang they suspected his house may be on fire. Vang went inside the home and told officers that the house was warm because he had left the heat on too high, the affidavit stated.

A search warrant was executed on Feb. 11, and officers found a marijuana growing operation in the basement and in an unoccupied bedroom. The basement contained marijuana plants, along with stems and remnants of marijuana plants indicating a recent marijuana harvest. Officers found Vang, along with his small child, in the basement and arrested him.

Vang faces a potential maximum penalty of 40 years in prison and a \$2 million fine. Judge Frank will determine a sentence at a future date. This case is the result of an investigation by the DEA, the Ramsey County Sheriff's Office and the police departments of Oakdale and White Bear Lake. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney David P. Steinkamp.

